

Department of Justice

§ 115.252

questions asked pursuant to this standard in order to ensure that sensitive information is not exploited to the resident's detriment by staff or other residents.

§ 115.242 Use of screening information.

(a) The agency shall use information from the risk screening required by § 115.241 to inform housing, bed, work, education, and program assignments with the goal of keeping separate those residents at high risk of being sexually victimized from those at high risk of being sexually abusive.

(b) The agency shall make individualized determinations about how to ensure the safety of each resident.

(c) In deciding whether to assign a transgender or intersex resident to a facility for male or female residents, and in making other housing and programming assignments, the agency shall consider on a case-by-case basis whether a placement would ensure the resident's health and safety, and whether the placement would present management or security problems.

(d) A transgender or intersex resident's own views with respect to his or her own safety shall be given serious consideration.

(e) Transgender and intersex residents shall be given the opportunity to shower separately from other residents.

(f) The agency shall not place lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or intersex residents in dedicated facilities, units, or wings solely on the basis of such identification or status, unless such placement is in a dedicated facility unit, or wing established in connection with a consent decree, legal settlement, or legal judgment for the purpose of protecting such residents.

§ 115.243 [Reserved]

REPORTING

§ 115.251 Resident reporting.

(a) The agency shall provide multiple internal ways for residents to privately report sexual abuse and sexual harassment, retaliation by other residents or staff for reporting sexual abuse and sexual harassment, and staff neglect or

violation of responsibilities that may have contributed to such incidents.

(b) The agency shall also inform residents of at least one way to report abuse or harassment to a public or private entity or office that is not part of the agency and that is able to receive and immediately forward resident reports of sexual abuse and sexual harassment to agency officials, allowing the resident to remain anonymous upon request.

(c) Staff shall accept reports made verbally, in writing, anonymously, and from third parties and shall promptly document any verbal reports.

(d) The agency shall provide a method for staff to privately report sexual abuse and sexual harassment of residents.

§ 115.252 Exhaustion of administrative remedies.

(a) An agency shall be exempt from this standard if it does not have administrative procedures to address resident grievances regarding sexual abuse.

(b)(1) The agency shall not impose a time limit on when a resident may submit a grievance regarding an allegation of sexual abuse.

(2) The agency may apply otherwise-applicable time limits on any portion of a grievance that does not allege an incident of sexual abuse.

(3) The agency shall not require a resident to use any informal grievance process, or to otherwise attempt to resolve with staff, an alleged incident of sexual abuse.

(4) Nothing in this section shall restrict the agency's ability to defend against a lawsuit filed by a resident on the ground that the applicable statute of limitations has expired.

(c) The agency shall ensure that—

(1) A resident who alleges sexual abuse may submit a grievance without submitting it to a staff member who is the subject of the complaint, and

(2) Such grievance is not referred to a staff member who is the subject of the complaint.

(d)(1) The agency shall issue a final agency decision on the merits of any portion of a grievance alleging sexual abuse within 90 days of the initial filing of the grievance.

§ 115.253

28 CFR Ch. I (7–1–14 Edition)

(2) Computation of the 90-day time period shall not include time consumed by residents in preparing any administrative appeal.

(3) The agency may claim an extension of time to respond, of up to 70 days, if the normal time period for response is insufficient to make an appropriate decision. The agency shall notify the resident in writing of any such extension and provide a date by which a decision will be made.

(4) At any level of the administrative process, including the final level, if the resident does not receive a response within the time allotted for reply, including any properly noticed extension, the resident may consider the absence of a response to be a denial at that level.

(e)(1) Third parties, including fellow residents, staff members, family members, attorneys, and outside advocates, shall be permitted to assist residents in filing requests for administrative remedies relating to allegations of sexual abuse, and shall also be permitted to file such requests on behalf of residents.

(2) If a third party files such a request on behalf of a resident, the facility may require as a condition of processing the request that the alleged victim agree to have the request filed on his or her behalf, and may also require the alleged victim to personally pursue any subsequent steps in the administrative remedy process.

(3) If the resident declines to have the request processed on his or her behalf, the agency shall document the resident's decision.

(f)(1) The agency shall establish procedures for the filing of an emergency grievance alleging that a resident is subject to a substantial risk of imminent sexual abuse.

(2) After receiving an emergency grievance alleging a resident is subject to a substantial risk of imminent sexual abuse, the agency shall immediately forward the grievance (or any portion thereof that alleges the substantial risk of imminent sexual abuse) to a level of review at which immediate corrective action may be taken, shall provide an initial response within 48 hours, and shall issue a final agency decision within 5 calendar days. The

initial response and final agency decision shall document the agency's determination whether the resident is in substantial risk of imminent sexual abuse and the action taken in response to the emergency grievance.

(g) The agency may discipline a resident for filing a grievance related to alleged sexual abuse only where the agency demonstrates that the resident filed the grievance in bad faith.

§ 115.253 Resident access to outside confidential support services.

(a) The facility shall provide residents with access to outside victim advocates for emotional support services related to sexual abuse by giving residents mailing addresses and telephone numbers, including toll-free hotline numbers where available, of local, State, or national victim advocacy or rape crisis organizations, and by enabling reasonable communication between residents and these organizations, in as confidential a manner as possible.

(b) The facility shall inform residents, prior to giving them access, of the extent to which such communications will be monitored and the extent to which reports of abuse will be forwarded to authorities in accordance with mandatory reporting laws.

(c) The agency shall maintain or attempt to enter into memoranda of understanding or other agreements with community service providers that are able to provide residents with confidential emotional support services related to sexual abuse. The agency shall maintain copies of agreements or documentation showing attempts to enter into such agreements.

§ 115.254 Third-party reporting.

The agency shall establish a method to receive third-party reports of sexual abuse and sexual harassment and shall distribute publicly information on how to report sexual abuse and sexual harassment on behalf of a resident.